

AMENDMENTS TO ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus (10) for manufacturing an optical component (1) having at least one photo-oriented polymeric layer is provided. The apparatus includes a single source of laser radiation (11), beam splitting means (13) for splitting the laser radiation into a first beam (14) of linearly polarised light having a first plane of polarization (P polarization) and a second beam (15) of linearly polarised light having a second plane of polarization (S polarization), first directing means for directing the first beam of linearly polarised light onto a first area or areas of at least one photo-orientatable polymeric layer to cause a first molecular orientation in said first area or areas of the layer and second directing means for directing the second beam of linearly polarised light onto said photo-orientatable polymeric layer to cause a second molecular orientation in a second area or areas of the layer. The apparatus includes delay means (17, 18, 19) for the second beam (15) of linearly polarised light so that the second beam arrives at the photo-orientatable polymeric layer a predetermined delay time after the first beam of linearly polarised light.